

Message Text

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SUBJECT: KING HUSSEIN INTERVIEW WITH NEWSWEEK

1. NEWSWEEK CORRESPONDENT ARNAUD DE BORCHGRAVE (PLEASEPROTECT AND AVOID ATTRIBUTION) FILLED US IN ON HIGHLIGHTS OF OFF-THE-RECORD ASPECTS OF HIS RECENT CONVERSATION WITH KING HUSSEIN, FOLLOWING KINGS RETURN FROM SAUDI ARABIA DISCUSSIONS WITH KING KHALID ON JORDANAIN AIR DEFENSE. (TEXT OF DE BROCHGRAVE FULL INTERVIEW WITH KING HUSSEIN FORWARDED BY SEPTTEL.) HE SAYS PORTION OF IT WILL APPEAR IN THIS WEEK'S NEWSWEEK (12JUL) AND IT WILL ALSO BE OFFERED TO PARIS HERALD TRIBUNE ON THAT DAY.)

2. DEBORCHGRAVE SAID KING TOLD HIM HE IS SOMEWHAT HEARTNED BY SAUDI RESPONSE DURING HIS MOST RECENT TRIP THERE ON JORDAN'S AIR DEFENSE FINANCING PROBLEMS SAUDIS SAID THEY WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM (INTHE NEXT FEW DAYS". REGARDING FINANCING A SCALED-DOWN HAWK/ VULCAN PACKAGE, WHICH DEBORCHGRAVE SAID KING HUSSEIN DESCRIBED TO HIM AS BEING IN THE DOLS 530 M RANGE. KING ADDED HOWEVER THAT GIVEN THE PAST DIFFICULTIES OVER OBTAINING SAUDI FINANCING FOR JORDAN AIR DEFENSE HE ISSTILL IN A WAIT AND SEE POSTURE UNTIL HE GETS A FIRM SAUDI COMMITMENT.

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3. KING AND SAUDIS NOW ESSENTIALLY HAVE TWOOFFERS

IN FRONT OF THEM, THE SCALED DOWN US PACKAGE AND THE SOVIET OFFER WHICH HUSSEIN PRICED AT DOLS517 MILLION. KING TOLD DE BORCHGRAVE THAT JORDANIANS PROPOSED THAT SOVIETS GIVE FINANCIAL TERMS OF TEN YEAR GRACE PERIOD AND ANOTHER TEN YEARS TO REPAY, BUT THAT SOVIETS HAD BALKED AND INSISTED ON CASH ON DELIVERY. KING CLAIMED HE WOULD HAVE SIGNED ON THE SPOT IN MOSCOW IF SOVIETS HAD ACCEPTED HIS TERMS.

4. WHEN KING INDICATED THAT LIBYA COULD BE CONCEIVABLE SOURCE OF FINANCING FOR SOVIET SYSTEM DE BORCHGRAVE COUNTERED SKEPTICALLY THAT IT SEEMED FAR FETCHED THAT THIS WOULD OCCUR AT ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL PRICE FOR JORDAN IN VIEW OF PREVIOUS LIBYAN-JORDANIAN BAD BLOOD OR RECENT LIBYAN ANTI-REGIME ACTIVITIES IN EGYPT AND SUDAN. KING SHRUGGED OFF THIS THOUGHT BY SAYING THAT JORDANIANS INTERNAL SECURITY IS STRONG ENOUGH TO HANDLE THE LIBYANS.

5. KING MADE POINT OF RE-AFFIRMING TO DE BORCHGRAVE HIS POSTION THAT JORDAN IS EFFECTIVELY OUT OF AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS. DESPITE FACT OF PLO DISSARAY IN LEBANON, KING SAID JORDAN CONSIDERED THAT RABAT CONFERENCE DECISIONS STILL HOLD. JORDAN WILLING TO CONSIDER ITS ROLE IN ANY MIDEAST CONFERENCE AS A CONFRONTATION STATE AND TO ASSIST THE PALESTINIANS IN THEIR EFFORT BUT JORDAN HAS NO RPT NO NEGOTIATING ROLE REGARDING THE WEST BANK. KING INDICATED HOWEVER THAT CONFESSIONAL STRIFE IN LEBANON HAS DESTROYED PLO IDEA THAT SECULAR DEMOCRATIC STATE IN "GREATER PALESTINE" COULD BE BASIS FOR A SOLUTION TO ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM.

6. DE BORCHGRAVE ALSO ASKED KING ABOUT RUMORS THAT ONE OF PROBLEMS WITH THE AIR DEFENSE DEAL WAS THAT SAUDIS WERE UNHAPPY WITH THE JORDANIANS-SYRIAN RAPPROCHMENT. IN REPLY KING HUSSEIN CLAIMED THAT SUADIS WERE LESS UNHAPPY OVER THE SUBSTANCE OF SYRIAN-JORDANIAN RELATIONS THAN OVER THE FACT THAT

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JORDANIANS AND SYRIANS WERE NOT "CONSULTING" THEM AND KEEPING SAUDIS ABREASTOF THESE DEVELOPMENTS. DE BORCHGRAVE THOUGHT THAT ARRIVAL SOON IN JORDAN OF NEW AND HIGHLY CONNECTED SAUDI AMBASSADOR SHAWAA(HIS BROTHER IS REPORTEDLY CLOSE ADVISOR TO SAUDI FONMIN PRINCE SAUDI, ACCORDING TO DEBORCHGRAVE) WOULD HOPE FULLY PROVIDE A BETTER LINGK WITH SAUDIS AND RELIVE KING HUSSEIN SOMEWHAT OF PERSONAL BURDEN OF FREQUENT

TRAVEL TO SAUDI ARABIA ON SUCH ISSUES.

7. INCIDENTALLY, KING HUSSEIN TOLD DE BROCHGRAVE HE UNDERSTOOD
THAT SYRIANS HAD ASKED SOVIET UNION FOR DOLS ONE BILLION
ARMS PACKAGE DURING EARLY JUNE KOSYGIN VISIT TO SYRIA
BUT THAT SOVIETS AGREED TO GIVE ONLY
DOLS 275 MILLION.
PICKERING

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